

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION – Performance Plan

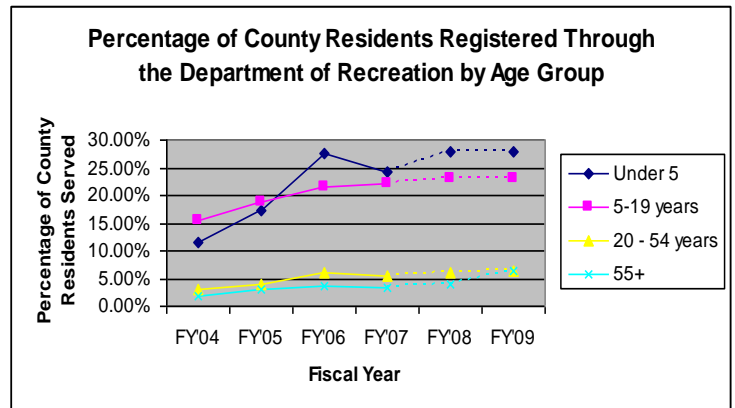
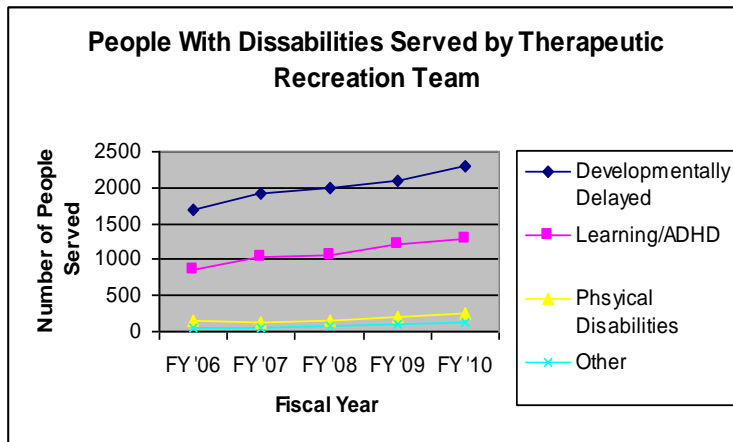
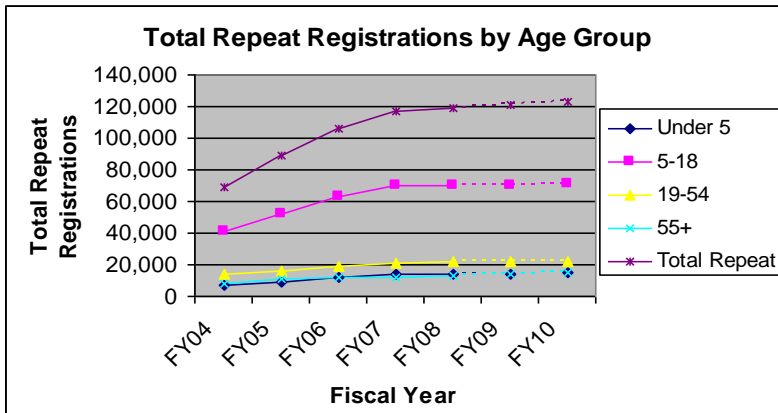
Contribution to Montgomery County Results:

- Greater Responsiveness and Accountability
- Healthy and Sustainable Communities
- Preparing Children to Live and Learn
- Ensuring Vital Living for All

Contribution of the Department or Recreation:

What MRCD Does and for Whom	How Much
Overall The mission of the Montgomery County Department of Recreation is to provide high quality, diverse and accessible programs, services and facilities that enhance the quality of life for all ages, cultures, and abilities. In FY'07 the Department had over 167,000 participants registered for services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY'08 Budget: \$31,054,970 • Provide \$750,000 in financial support • Approved Personnel Complement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 450.2 work years ○ 168 positions ○ 3,000 seasonal employees
Aquatics Operates seven outdoor pools, four indoor aquatic facilities and a community splash park. Indoor pools operate 17 hours per day, 7 days a week approximately 340 days a year. Open to all residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$6,707,180 (21.6% of budget) • 145.6 WY • 1,800,000 visits to aquatics facilities
Camps and Classes Classes range from arts and crafts, fitness, music, dance to special interest and are provided to all age groups. <i>Camps</i> programs include interest areas such as sports, nature, and arts. Summer activities are from four years of age through early teens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2,883,469 (9.3% of budget) • 49.3 WY • 64 camps with 9,100 registrants • 2,270 classes • 25,600 registrants
Recreation Regions and Community Centers The Department's 18 recreation centers host programs for the Department, other agencies, and community organizations. Centers provide leisure activities, social interaction, family participation, neighborhood civic involvement, and promote community cohesion and identity for all County residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$8,030,004 (26.9% of budget) • 90.03 WY • 18 facilities • 728,063 visits to Centers
Charles W. Gilchrist Center for Cultural Diversity Offers English as a Second Language classes, citizenship preparation, legal clinic, computer classes, small business development, job training, acculturation programs and services for newcomers to the County and US.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$309,000 (.01% of budget) • 3.7 WY • 43,000 visits to the Center • Participants represent over 71 countries
Sports Provides an extensive program in adult and youth sports leagues, tournaments and instructional clinics. Programs are offered on a county wide basis, for ages five through ninety and offer a variety of benefits from fitness, stress reduction to socialization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2,496,611 (8% of budget) • 34.6 WY • 36,100 registrants • 12,500 registrants in youth basketball
Seniors and Therapeutic Recreation <i>Seniors</i> offers services for adults age 55 and above which include four senior centers, neighborhood programs, classes, sports and fitness, trips, and special programs for frail and isolated seniors. <i>Therapeutic Recreation</i> services provide accessible leisure, educational and personal skill development activities for individuals with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$3,135,264 (10.0% of budget) • 40.2 WY • 15,502 Senior participants • 3,510 Therapeutic Recreation participants
Affiliated Recreation Services Coordinates Department and other community based special events, wellness programs (i.e., nutrition and physical fitness), and promotions for the Department as well as all automation and IT needs for Recreation staff and facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2,267,208 (7.4% of budget) • 19.1 WY • 52 special events – 138,000 People • 208 wellness programs • 7,376 wellness participants
Teen Team Coordinates programs for middle and high school teens. This includes sports academies, Rec Extra middle school programs, teen leadership programs, teen clubs, and summer teen programming; all of which have an emphasis on positive youth development and gang prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5,226,234 (16.8% of budget) • 67.4 WY • 11,698 registrants

Performance Measures¹



Under Construction

Percentage of youth participating in Recreation programs during out of school time.

The number of youth registrations we currently have only represents two teams within the department. As part of our data development plan discussed later, we will improve the collection of information across all

Under Construction

Percentage of participants who reported or demonstrated improved well being

*This question is not currently asked consistently across the Department. It will be added to questionnaires that are discussed in the data development section of this document.

Under Construction

Percentage of customers who report that they are satisfied

*This question is not currently asked consistently across the Department. It will be added to questionnaires that are discussed in the data development section of this document.

¹ These results may be incomplete, as they only reflect programs that are administered through CLASS Software Solutions (CLASS) – the Department’s registration database. Not all programs utilize CLASS currently, and several have only been added in the last few years. For instance, in FY 04, Aquatics Swim Lessons, most seniors programs, and Teen Trips, among others did not utilize CLASS. Additionally, some Sports Leagues, some senior activities, and some other Departmental programs are still not utilizing CLASS, so their numbers will not be reflected in this report.

The Story Behind the Performance

Contributing Factors:

Accessible and Affordable Programs/Services

- Community recreation is available for County residents of all age groups and abilities.
- The number of customers who return to our programs and services continues to grow. The Department has recently started to survey customers through its Classes Team. By in large Classes participants report having enjoyable experiences.
- The Department offers over 6,000 programs and services annually.

Accessible Facilities

- The Recreation Department operates 32 facilities across the County that are open 12-17 hours per day, 340 days per year. The facilities are in all parts of the County.
- Our facilities offer activities that provide skill development, physical enhancement and relaxation, as well as cultural and social opportunities. In addition to Recreation Department programming, our facilities are rented out to county citizens for events such as community meetings, workshops, trainings, community events, and social gatherings.

Programs built to meet the needs

- Our county is seeing a growing senior citizen population, more latch key kids, and an increased awareness in serving individuals with special needs. The Department is flexible in its program offering and can adjust to meet demand as needed by adding, eliminating, or modifying programs in a timely fashion.

Restricting Factors:

Staffing Challenge

- The Department is understaffed at recreation centers where we are usually forced to staff facilities with only one staff member. Facilities regularly have multiple programs running at the same time and with only one staff member on duty this creates the potential for poor customer service and raises safety concerns.
- The Department competes poorly with other industries on wages and therefore finds it difficult to find quality and dedicated seasonal staff.
- Programs for youth and individuals with special needs require a low participant to staff ratio and current staffing does not meet demand.

Revenue Requirement

- The \$10 million revenue requirement from the County along with the Recreation Department's internal revenue model to meet this requirement provides a huge barrier to service. Balancing a social mission with this revenue requirement means often having to make program and service decisions based on the ability to "make our revenue" instead of doing what is necessary to provide quality programs, services, and abilities for all areas of the county. This results in disproportionate programming for those that can afford them and may leave out those that can't.

Communication and Marketing

- We often hear "I didn't know that program existed." The Department relies mainly on its Recreation Guide for mass marketing of its services and facilities. There is too much information to include in the Guide, especially community based programs located in the Centers. Therefore, many of our programs are not promoted effectively.
- The Department does not have a comprehensive communications/marketing plan, which leads to lost opportunities to cross promote programs and market them effectively.

Competition and Other Barriers to Service

- There is increasing competition for our customer's discretionary income and leisure time from private providers such as private sports associations, gyms, other agencies, etc.

- Transportation issues and day care challenges are barriers to county residents accessing services and programs. This disproportionately has an effect on County residents in lower economic categories.
- Over 70% of youth in Montgomery County are now coming home to households with both parents working. This has increased the need for out-of-school time opportunities for youth. To meet demand, the Department will create more out-of-school time opportunities at Recreation Centers, which will result in the displacement or cancellation of some activities and services.
- The challenging economic situation facing the County and Country is having an impact in numerous ways. One strong example is the Department has received a record amount of requests for financial assistance and there is concern that the requests may outpace the Department's ability to meet them.

Growing Diversity of the County

- The County population is increasingly diverse economically, socially, and culturally. Consequently, there is a much broader range of interests in the kinds of programs and services the Department offers. It is becoming increasingly difficult to keep up with the expanded demand for services.

Facility challenges:

- Some recreation facilities are operating near capacity during certain seasons, making it difficult to add additional programs and services. Thus, the Recreation Department must pay for space in schools or in Parks to increase programming and that means higher costs. This cost is often passed on to the customer, which makes some programs and services unaffordable.
- Due to the Department's organizational structure, there is not sufficient communication between internal teams so as to maximize usage of facilities.
- Facilities and equipment, especially as they continue to age, are expensive to maintain because of high multiple uses as well as the issue of facilities that were not originally designed to serve as recreation centers (i.e. Ross Body was originally a school).
- Renovation and modernization and new costs are growing at a higher pace than the County's ability to pay these costs. As facilities continue to age, deferred maintenance becomes a critical issue.
- Despite an increase in facilities and wear and tear on equipment, the Department's Planned Lifecycle Asset Replacement has not increased at a rate high enough to meet demand.

What We Propose to Do to Improve Performance

Increase Engagement of County Residents

The Department will continually engage County residents to determine if their interests are being met and stay ahead of demand. This will be done through the administering of surveys at Recreation facilities and programs. To ensure that it is reaching residents that are not accessing services the Department will also administer surveys at other government facilities, private businesses, and through media outlets. Lastly, the Department will host annual community forums to establish dialogue with residents regarding their interests and needs.

Improve Marketing and Communication

The Department recently was appropriated funds to hire a Marketing Manager to assist with the Development of a comprehensive marketing and communications plan for the Department. In the short term, the Department will increase its grass roots marketing efforts and make better and more coordinated use of its current communications tools such as the web-site, Destination Recreation (the monthly 15 minute Recreation segment on Montgomery Cable), and RECoRD Newsletter.

Change Revenue Model

The Department will adjust its revenue model to become more program focused by spreading the revenue requirement evenly throughout the Department as opposed to having this burden fall on certain teams. This will be done through the assistance of a consultant to help adjust the internal business model, but still meet the revenue requirement.

Create More Out-of-School Time Opportunities for Youth

The Department will collaborate with other agencies, MCPS, community based organizations and others to establish a continuum of services for youth, especially in target areas where youth are more at risk of joining gangs. The Department's

role in this continuum will be to establish more recreation based programming that offers youth a safe and well supervised environment to play in both structured and unstructured activities. The partnerships will allow the Department to add components such as case management, academic assistance, and other social services. The Department will utilize its existing resources and adjust programming at facilities to offer more out-of-school time programming particularly during 3 to 6pm during the school year and in the summer.

Program and Facilities Audit

The Department will institute a bi-annual program and facility usage audit to ensure the maximized use of all Department facilities. This will be a multi-team internal effort to ensure better communication and collaboration among Department staff that will lead to less dependence of the usage of other facilities which often require a rental payment, which in turn creates higher costs for programming.

Increase More Recreation Opportunities for People with Disabilities

The Department will partner with private providers and community based organizations to create more programming opportunities for people with disabilities, by utilizing the staff of these organizations and space at facilities provided by the Department. The Department will utilize existing resources to create more opportunities such as a sports league for people with disabilities.

Create More Targeted Opportunities for Seniors

The Department has established a task force to evaluate its current program offering for seniors and establish more targeted programming to baby boomers. The Department will partner with other agencies, provide providers, and others expand programming for all seniors and create more recreation opportunities throughout the year.

Diversity Recruitment

The Department has placed an emphasis on hiring bi-lingual staff, particularly at front line positions such as the customer service desk to answer questions and address the needs of the County's growing immigrant population.

